

13th

DISTRICT

ALDERMAN

Scott P. Spiker



*The
Garden
District*

200 E. Wells St. | Milwaukee, WI 53202 | 286-8537 | milwaukee.gov/district13 | Scott.Spiker@milwaukee.gov

FALL 20

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Well, 2020 will soon be in the books, and good riddance! But instead of dwelling on all of the challenges and missed opportunities brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, I thought I'd focus in this newsletter on some of the positive stories from this year.

We truly have a wonderful district and there have been a number of positive developments worth trumpeting. From new businesses coming to our area, to new playgrounds, park improvements, innovative green infrastructure projects, and award-winning people and places, the Garden District just keeps growing!

Significant challenges lie ahead, to be sure. But I'm anxious for 2021 to get started so we can build on the positive momentum we already have going. Until then, stay well, be safe, and Happy Holidays to you and yours!

Scott Spiker
Alderman, 13th District



Committee Assignments

Vice Chair

- Finance and Personnel Committee

Member

- Judiciary and Legislation Committee
- Public Safety and Health Committee
- Administrative Review Appeals Board

View meetings online:

milwaukee.gov/citychannel

Thank You

In April, I was re-elected as your alderman for four more years. We won by a 23% margin, and carried 22 of the 23 voting wards in our district. Thank you for the tremendous vote of confidence!

I look forward to continuing to represent your interests at City Hall and to providing first-class customer service to residents in need of city services.


Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can be of assistance in any way. I am here to help and to serve!



Solar Field

I was proud to sponsor legislation in the Common Council this year that is bringing the largest solar project in Milwaukee's history right here to our district. Under the terms agreed to, WE Energies will lease an undevelopable former city landfill adjacent to the airport and install and maintain more than 7,000 solar panels on it at no cost to city taxpayers.

This solar field will generate over two million watts of electricity—enough energy to power 460 homes—without burning any fossil fuels whatsoever. In addition, it will bring in close to \$100,000 in revenue to the City each year, and will serve as a backup source of power for the nearby Air National Guard in case of an emergency.

This is a big win for our pocketbook, our security, and our environment. Win-win-win! 



The signs, they are a-changin'


The welcome mat to our district saw a big improvement this year with new signage for Mitchell International Airport at Howell and Layton and for the community garden space at 6th and Howard.






Southgate Playfield

Late this summer we saw the grand opening of the new Southgate Playfield at 25th and Ohio. Incorporating a giant new green space, a walking loop, basketball courts, shade trees, a splash pad, and some fantastic new playground equipment, the playfield is a huge improvement over the asphalt lot that used to be there. Finally, we have a play space worthy of the neighborhood!

Thanks to Lynn Greb and her team at MPS Recreation for their hard work on this important project. And thank you to the neighbors who assisted us with the design! 

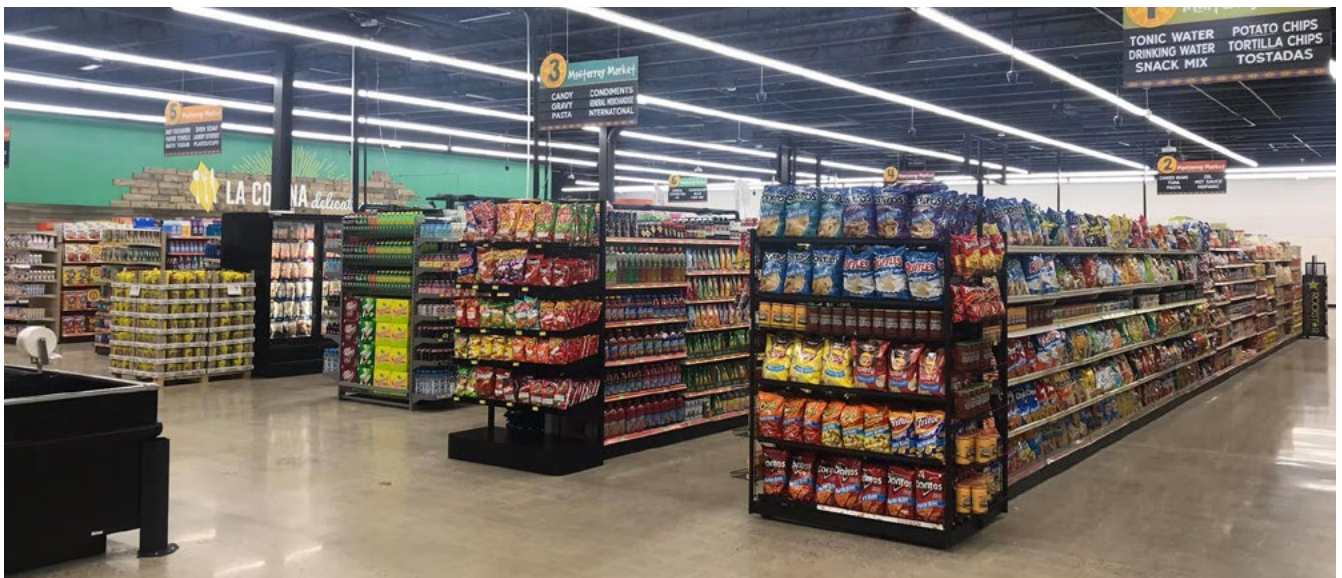


Monterrey Market Plaza Opens in Former Toys "R" Us Building

We are excited to welcome a new grocery store to the S. 27th St. business corridor. Early this fall, Robert and Leonor Montemayor, the owners of Monterrey Market at 3014 S. 13th St., opened an international grocery store in the former Toys "R" Us building at 27th and Howard. Featuring a full complement of produce and meats, a deli, bakery, sit-down space to eat, and so much more, Monterrey Market Plaza is a welcome new addition to one of the major commercial areas in our district. Glad to have you in the Garden District, Robert and Leonor! 



Alderman Spiker welcomes Leonor and Robert Montemayor to the Garden District.





Tour of the Garden District

This year, many of the events we have come to know and love in our district were canceled due to COVID-related restrictions on gatherings. Nevertheless, the Garden District Neighborhood Association got creative in finding ways for residents to enjoy the beauty of the district. Over the summer and early fall, there were two separate driving tours of the district where residents could see some of the spectacular flower displays that make our area unique, while maintaining social distancing. A special thank you to Judith Free and Sherry Duffy for helping to organize these events! Here are but a few samples of what was on display.





Alderman Scott Spiker at the 2019 tree lighting ceremony. We will see you again in 2021!

Winter Wonderland

This year will mark the third year of the Winter Wonderland display of lights and wooden cut outs at 6th and Howard. Although there will be no tree lighting ceremony this year due to COVID (that word again!), the decorations will be on display from December 1 through early January, bringing holiday cheer and a piece of the downtown lighting displays into our own neighborhood. Thanks to former alderman Terry Witkowski, Mr. Chad from Reagan High School, Bryan Simon, the Gateway to Milwaukee, and this year's crop of volunteers for helping us make this dream a reality!

Watch a video of the light display at: milwaukee.gov/district13. 



Welcome These Restaurants To The Garden District



Pizza De Brazil

In the former Perkins building at 1st and Layton. Serving traditional rodizio-style pizza and more!

Camacho's Family Restaurant

At the former location of the Crocus Restaurant at 3577 S. 13th St. A family-style restaurant with a bar and banquet hall to boot!



Asadero Fiesta Garibaldi

In the former home of Fritz's Pub at 20th and Oklahoma. A high-end steakhouse with a Mexican flair.

Saveland Park Neighborhood Association

Who says you can't organize neighbors in a pandemic? I held a very productive virtual meeting with residents of the Saveland Park area early this fall to gauge people's interest in rebooting the Saveland Park Neighborhood Association. We had an excellent turnout and discussion, and the end result was that a robust steering committee was formed for the new group. Wasting no time, they set about organizing a Halloween decorating contest (see pictures) and put together a webpage for the group: <https://sites.google.com/view/savelandparkna>.

If you would like to organize a neighborhood group in your area and have five friends in your area who are interested too, please reach out to me at **286-8537** or scott.spiker@milwaukee.gov and I'd be happy to work with you to get one started. ■





Local Entrepreneurs Receive Recognition

Jesus and Thaime Nañez, co-owners of the Farmhouse Paint N' Sip over at 4511 S. 6th St., were recognized this year not once but twice for their creativity, business acumen, and entrepreneurship. I was proud to be on hand on both occasions (can you guess which one was pre-COVID?) to honor and celebrate their accomplishments. Congratulations, Jesus and Thaime, and thank you for representing well the strong business community we have here in the Garden District! 📌



Above: Alderman Spiker congratulates Jesus and Thaime Nañez on receiving the Heart of the Gateway Award from the Gateway to Milwaukee Business Association.

Top Left: Winners again! Alderman Spiker joins Jesus and Thaime as they are recognized by the U.S. Small Business Administration with the 2020 Emerging Small Business Award.

Reckless Driving, Speeding, and Redesigning Roads

Speeding and reckless driving are problems throughout the city, and our district is no exception. One of the most frequent requests I make of our police district is for greater enforcement of our traffic laws. In the end, however, the Captain only has so many resources at her disposal to deal with such a pervasive problem.

That's why we need to get creative. One of the recommendations of the recent task force on reckless driving was to engineer our streets in a way so as to discourage bad behavior behind the wheel. Now and in the not-too-distant future, you will be seeing changes to our city streets that incorporate these recommendations.

For example... Just this spring, we capped off last year's resurfacing of Layton Ave by adding bike lanes. Why bike lanes on such a busy road? Well, the wider a road appears, the greater

the tendency to speed on it, according to the traffic engineers. So if you narrow a road visually with some painted bike lanes (thus eliminating the parking lane that no one was using to park in but just to speed down), you can slow down traffic, according to the data we have.

The same concept is going to be utilized on S. 13th St. between Howard and Layton next year when that road is given a "road diet" to deal with the consistent speeding problem there. The number of driving lanes will be reduced and a dedicated turning lane will be added.

Lastly, state funding will make changes to two major roadways in our district possible in the years ahead. Howard Avenue between 6th St. and Clement Ave. will be resurfaced, most likely in 2023, and is sure to incorporate improvements to deal with speeding and pedestrian/bicycle safety. Further-

more, in roughly the same time period, Oklahoma Ave between 6th St. and 27th St. will see various safety improvements such as curb extensions and pedestrian islands.

I have already been part of a virtual (what else?!) meeting with residents bordering this section of Howard Ave to solicit their feedback, and as the grant for Oklahoma Ave moves forward, there will be public outreach about this project as well. Stay tuned for more on these exciting developments! 📌



City of Milwaukee's 2021 Budget

As this newsletter goes to press, we are just wrapping up the City's budget for 2021. This year was especially tough, with shared revenue from the State remaining stagnant and the cost to continue providing the same city services (especially, police and fire) rising. The future looks even tougher with a major increase in pension payments on the horizon for 2023.

(For a clear summary of the city's fiscal challenges, please see the Wisconsin Policy Forum's report here: <https://wispolicyforum.org/research/budget-brief-city-of-milwaukee-2021-proposed-budget/>)

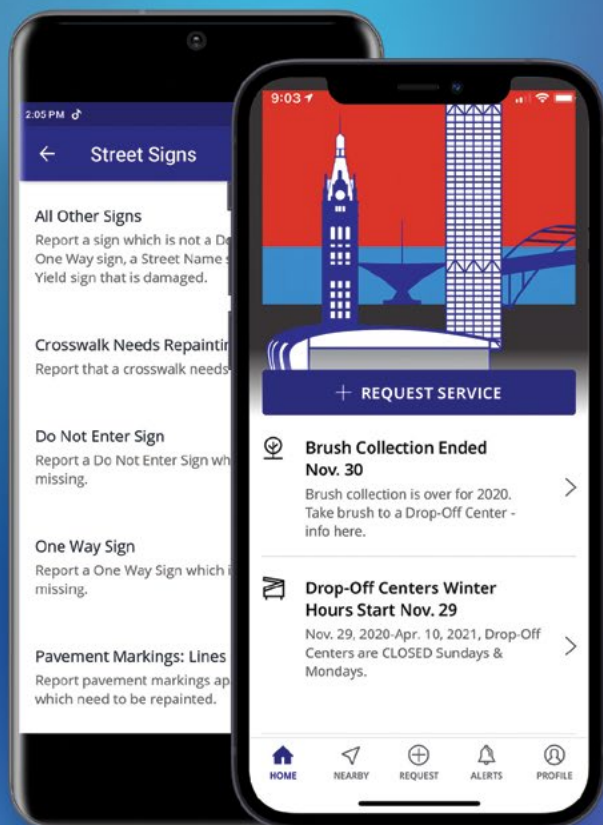
The result is that even though the Mayor's proposed budget keeps police funding basically flat, it results in a loss of 120 positions through attrition in 2021. Moreover, even though that budget adds \$7.1 million to the Fire Department, it still results in the loss of yet another engine company, this time in our district (Engine 17).

I proposed four separate amendments to restore the funding for the lost engine company. All four failed, including my proposal to pause the streetcar for a year while COVID continues to decimate ridership. (If you abandon it completely, we were told, you have to pay back the federal government's \$69 million grant that funded the project in the first place.)

Given the reduction in police and fire services, I could not, in good conscience support the proposed \$10 increase in the wheel tax, nor could I support the establishment of a new \$45 street lighting fee. Paying more for less is not something our district's taxpayers deserve. Despite my "no" votes, both measures passed.

As bad as things turned out to be in this budget, they could have been worse. Although there was no appetite among my colleagues for restoring lost positions in the police department given the current climate, talk of laying off hundreds of officers was thankfully not acted upon. Moreover, federal CARES Act dollars allowed the Health Department to address the current COVID crisis this year without breaking the bank. Whether additional federal and state support is forthcoming for next year remains, at this point, unknown.

Thank you to everyone who attended our virtual town hall about the budget in October. If you wish to be alerted of future virtual meetings during the pandemic, please sign up for my eNotify list here: <https://city.milwaukee.gov/enotify> or watch for postings on the Nextdoor app. I look forward to the day when we all can start meeting in person again! ▀



MKE Mobile Action

Request services, file reports, and follow up from your mobile device.

Residents can use MKE Mobile Action to locate, photograph, and provide supporting information to ensure speedy resolution of issues. Examples of issues that can be reported include: Abandoned Vehicles, Graffiti, Litter, Potholes, and more.

Available on iOS and Android devices.

Search terms:

MKE Mobile Action, Milwaukee Mobile, Milwaukee UCC, Milwaukee Services






Business Associations Make Us Better!

The Garden District is home to two of the most successful business associations in the entire city: the “Gateway to Milwaukee” in the area closer to the airport and “Historic U.S. 41” along and around S. 27th St.

Both groups spend their own money to improve our area, including through their beautification efforts. (See the accompanying pictures for some examples.) This year, they also helped businesses adapt to the post-pandemic world with grants for marketing, PPEs, and modifications of their interiors to improve customer and employee safety. This was a helpful complement to the City’s own efforts through its Restart Program, funded with CARES Act dollars.

As you know, local business is what gives an area its distinctive character. Let’s thank these groups for making our community stronger by supporting Garden District businesses as much as we can during these challenging times. They have always been there for us, so we should be there for them in their time of need! 



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In February, I had the pleasure of attending the 71st Annual Crime Prevention Awards where our own Officer Michael Ward of District Six was named 2020's Outstanding Community Liaison Officer by LISC Milwaukee and Safe and Sound. Pictured (from left to right) are Sergeant McBride, Officer Ward, his partner Officer Garcia, myself and Captain Riestra. Congratulations to Officer Ward on his remarkable achievement!



Alderman Spiker presents Zeno Wilson with a plaque from the Common Council for his work on the gazebo project in Wilson Park.



Look at me now! Zeno stands in his newly refurbished gazebo.

Wilson Park Gazebo

If you are one of the frequent walkers in Wilson Park, you may have noticed the sorry state of the gazebo over by the lagoon in recent years. With peeling paint, rotting wood, and overgrown bushes, the gazebo was in definite need of a makeover. But with limited funds and staffing available for repairs at the County, this project sat on hold.

Enter Zeno Wilson, future Eagle Scout. Zeno took on the rehabilitation project in September of 2019 and spent the next year restoring the gazebo to its former glory. Coordinating a group of 28 volunteers working a total of 345 hours, Zeno was able to rip out the old bushes and replace them with landscaping (thanks to Paul from Custom Grown Greenhouses), identify and replace the broken rails and slats, and clean and repaint the gazebo. It now looks fantastic!

Thank you to Zeno, his parents, and all of the volunteers who helped him accomplish this herculean task. Zeno has left all park users with a legacy they can enjoy for years to come!

You can see the evolution of Zeno's project here:
<https://www.facebook.com/ZenoMKE> 